

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WELLIN 04926 01 OF 02 020238Z
ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 ONY-00 /007 W
-----069983 020310Z /66/61
O 020107Z NOV 77
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4277

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 WELLINGTON 04926

LIMDIS

EA/ANP - EYES ONLY FOR SELDEN

E.O. 11652: XGDS
TAGS: EFIS, ETRD, MARR, PINS, NZ, UR, AS, US
SUBJECT: POSSIBLE NZ-USSR FISHING COOPERATION AGREEMENT

REF: (A) WELLINGTON 4558; (B) STATE 243511;
(C) STATE 243505; (C) WELLINGTON 4841

1. THIS MESSAGE SUMMARIZES POINTS DISCUSSED DURING A MEETING IN WELLINGTON ON OCTOBER 28 BETWEEN AMBASSADOR SELDEN AND COUNTRY TEAM MEMBERS AND IS EXCLUSIVELY FOR USE BY AMBASSADOR SELDEN WHO IS NOW IN WASHINGTON ON CONSULTATION.

2. THE COMMENTS OF THE SECRETARY, THE DEPUTY SECRETARY, AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE DURING THEIR RECENT MEETINGS WITH FORMIN TALBOYS AND FORSEC CORNER ARE BEING INTERPRETED BY MFA AS A GREEN LIGHT FROM THE US FOR NEGOTIATION OF A NEW ZEALAND-USSR FISHING COOPERATION AGREEMENT. THE MFA, HOWEVER, APPEARS TO HAVE FAILED TO UNDERSTAND THE TENTATIVE NATURE OF THOSE COMMENTS (SEE REFTELS B AND C). IN PARTICULAR, MFA SEEMS TO HAVE OVERLOOKED ASST. SEC. HOLBROOKE'S VERY EXPLICIT STATEMENT THAT
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WE ARE STILL STUDYING THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ANZUS PARTNERS AND EXPECT TO HAVE OUR FINDINGS READY BY THE TIME PRIME MINISTER MULDOON ARRIVES IN WASHINGTON (REF B, PARA 11). THE CARTER-MULDOON MEETING, THEREFORE, WILL BE OUR LAST CHANCE TO SPEAK UP BEFORE SOVIET NEGOTIATORS ARRIVE IN WELLINGTON, PROBABLY IN LATE NOVEMBER (SEE SEPTTEL ON GNZ INVITATIONS TO THE USSR AND SOUTH KOREA TO

NEGOTIATE AGREEMENTS).

3. AS REPORTED IN REF (D), AUSTRALIAN FORMIN PEACOCK INTENDED TO TRY TO DISSUADE TALBOYS FROM GOING AHEAD WITH AN AGREEMENT WITH THE SOVIETS DURING A MEETING THEY HAD SCHEDULED FOR CANBERRA IN MID-NOVEMBER. THIS MEETING HAS BEEN CANCELLED BECAUSE OF THE FORTHCOMING AUSTRALIAN ELECTIONS, BUT WE EXPECT THAT PEACOCK WILL NOW PURSUE THE MATTER THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS.

4. RECOGNIZING THAT SOME KIND OF NZ-USSR FISHING AGREEMENT IS INEVITABLE, WE BELIEVE THAT THE USG NEVERTHELESS SHOULD TAKE THIS LAST OPPORTUNITY TO TRY TO LIMIT THE SCOPE OF ANY AGREEMENT THAT MIGHT BE REACHED. IF WE ACT IN PARALLEL WITH FORMIN PEACOCK'S EFFORTS, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THERE IS STILL A REASONABLE POSSIBILITY OF KEEPING THE SCOPE OF THE AGREEMENT TO A MINIMUM CONSONANT WITH OUR IMMEDIATE CONCERN ABOUT SECURITY IN THE PACIFIC ISLAND STATES AND OUR LONG-TERM CONCERNS ABOUT SECURITY IN NEW ZEALAND ITSELF AND THE EFFECT ON THE ANZUS ALLIANCE.

5. IN OUR SEPTTEL ON THE GNZ INVITATION TO THE USSR AND SOUTH KOREA TO NEGOTIATE FISHING AGREEMENTS, WE DESCRIBE A FOUR-STEP PROCESS. INITIALLY, THE SOVIETS AND SOUTH KOREANS WILL BE ASKED TO SIGN AN UMBRELLA AGREEMENT DESIGNED TO SET BROAD PARAMETERS TO PROTECT NZ FISHERIES. CONFIDENTIAL

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THEN, THE GNZ WOULD UNILATERALLY DETERMINE THE AMOUNT OF SURPLUS AVAILABLE TO A SIGNATORY, WHERE IT COULD OPERATE, AND THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH IT COULD OPERATE. NEXT, IN RESPONSE TO THOSE DETERMINATIONS, THE SIGNATORY WOULD ANNUALLY SUBMIT "FISHING PLAN." FINALLY, THE GNZ WOULD APPROVE OR MODIFY THE ANNUAL PLAN. IT IS DURING THE SECOND AND THIRD STAGES THAT ON-SHORE ELEMENTS MIGHT BE AGREED UPON. IT IS ALSO AT THESE STAGES THAT THE GNZ WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO MINIMIZE AND CONTROL SOVIET ON-SHORE PRESENCE. SOME OPTIONS WOULD BE TO LIMIT THE FREQUENCY OF PORT CALLS, REQUIRE ADVANCE NOTIFICATION OF PORT CALLS, REQUIRE THE EXCLUSIVE USE OF NEW ZEALAND-OWNED COMMERCIAL FACILITIES FOR REPLENISHMENT, REPAIR AND CREW ACCOMMODATION, AVOID A JOINT VENTURE ARRANGEMENT (WHICH WOULD CREATE AN INTERNAL LOBBY FOR CONTINUANCE OF THE AGREEMENT AND INVOLVE THE PRESENCE OF SOVIET EXECUTIVES), AND PROVIDE FOR CREW EXCHANGE, IF ANY, BY AEROFLOT AND AIR NEW ZEALAND IN SINGAPORE RATHER THAN IN NEW ZEALAND. FROM THE US POINT OF VIEW, THE LESS ON-SHORE ACCESS AND PRESENCE, THE BETTER.

6. THE GNZ'S TIMETABLE ENVISAGES THAT THE BILATERAL

UMBRELLA AGREEMENTS WILL BE SETTLED BY CHRISTMAS AND THAT THE ANNUAL FISHING PLANS WILL BE NEGOTIATED EARLY IN THE NEW YEAR AND FINALIZED BEFORE APRIL 1, 1978.

7. IN TERMS OF US INTEREST, WE ARE PRIMARILY CONCERNED ABOUT THE LONG-TERM IMPLICATIONS OF SOVIET ENTREE INTO NEW ZEALAND GAINED THROUGH A FISHING COOPERATION AGREEMENT. IMMEDIATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTELLIGENCE GATHERING AND COVERT OPERATIONS WOULD BE CREATED AND WE CANNOT IGNORE THESE. HOWEVER, THE POLITICAL LEVERAGE THE SOVIETS

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ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 ONY-00 /007 W
-----070057 020312Z /66/61

O 020107Z NOV 77

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4278

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 WELLINGTON 04926

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MAY ULTIMATELY GAIN OVER SOME FUTURE GOVERNMENT AND THE PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE THEY MAY ACHIEVE IN NEW ZEALAND ARE WHERE OUR INTERESTS ARE MOST HEAVILY AFFECTED. A SOVIET ON-SHORE PRESENCE IS LIKELY TO SOLIDIFY THE ALREADY SIMPLISTIC NOTION OF MUCH OF THE NZ PUBLIC THAT A SECURITY THREAT DOES NOT EXIST UNLESS A DIRECT MILITARY INVASION A LA THE JAPANESE IN WWII IS LIKELY. THE LONG-TERM TREND IS TOWARD NON-ALIGNMENT AND SOVIETS ON-SHORE COULD ONLY HELP TO ACCELERATE THAT TREND.

8. DESPITE THIS, WE BELIEVE FOR TACTICAL REASONS THAT ANY ARGUMENT TO MULDOON SHOULD FOCUS ON THE EFFECT OF A USSR-NZ FISHING AGREEMENT ON THE PACIFIC ISLAND STATES. IT IS "HIS" POLICY AND ATTACKING IT FRONTALLY IS UNLIKELY TO BE PRODUCTIVE. THEREFORE, WE WOULD ARGUE THAT ANY AGREEMENT BETWEEN NZ AND THE SOVIET UNION THREATENS TO PRECIPITATE A SPATE OF SIMILAR AGREEMENTS WITH PACIFIC ISLAND STATES, RATHER THAN TO FORECLOSE THIS POSSIBILITY AS ARGUED BY THE GNZ. TO WHATEVER DEGREE THE GNZ LIMITS SOVIET ON-

SHORE ACCESS, IT WILL PRESERVE ITS STANDING TO INFLUENCE ISLAND STATE LEADERS TO LIMIT SOVIET PRESENCE THERE AS WELL. GIVEN THE FRAGILE POLITICS AND ECONOMICS OF THE ISLAND STATES, WE SEE ANY SUBSTANTIAL SOVIET PRESENCE AS A CONFIDENTIAL

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THREAT TO THEIR POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE AND FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH THE US AND OUR ANZUS PARTNERS.

9. BEYOND TACTICS, HOWEVER, OUR DIRECT INTEREST IN THE PACIFIC ISLANDS IS CLEARLY UNDERGOING A RESURGENCE AFTER MORE THAN 20 YEARS OF NEGLECT. THIS RESURGENCE IS JUST NOW GAINING MORE MOMENTUM AS OUR FUTURE INTERESTS REGARDING DEFENSE, MISSILE TESTING FACILITIES, FISHING, ISLAND CLAIMS, THE CONSTITUTIONAL RELATIONSHIP TO THE TTPI, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ARE BEING DEFINED.

10. AS WE STATED IN REF (A), WE HAVE CONFIDENCE IN THE ABILITY OF THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT OF NEW ZEALAND TO KEEP THE SOVIETS AT POLITICAL ARMS LENGTH. THOUGH WE WOULD

NOT WANT TO GIVE THE SLIGHTEST HINT OF LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN ANY FUTURE LABOUR PARTY GOVERNMENT, WE BELIEVE THAT THIS IS WHERE OUR PROBLEMS WOULD LIE. WE THEREFORE SEE AN ADDED ADVANTAGE TO THE US IF THE SCOPE OF THE ENVISAGED AGREEMENT CAN BE LIMITED. IT WOULD MEAN THAT A FUTURE GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE TO FACE THE PROSPECT OF A PUBLIC DEBATE ON AN EXPANDED AGREEMENT AS WELL AS RENEWED SCRUTINY BY ITS ALLIANCE PARTNERS.

11. ACTION REQUESTED: WE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING BY CABLE THE STUDY REFERRED TO BY ASST. SEC. HOLBROOKE IN REF (B) SO THAT WE CAN COMMENT ON IT. OUR AUSTRALIAN COLLEAGUES WOULD ALSO FIND IT USEFUL IN TAILORING THEIR APPROACH, IF IT CAN BE SHARED WITH THEM. WE ALSO CALL ATTENTION AGAIN TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH WE MADE IN REF (A), PARA 14. HEALY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FISHING AGREEMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 02-Nov-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977WELLIN04926
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: 1
Expiration:
Film Number: D770402-0766
Format: TEL
From: WELLINGTON
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 2
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197711102/aaaadkas.tel
Line Count: 210
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 57e6270e-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: NODIS, ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS, ONLY
Reference: 77 WELLINGTON 4558, 77 STATE 243511, 77 STATE 243505, 77 WELLINGTON 4841
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 394955
Secure: LOCK1
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POSSIBLE NZ-USSR FISHING COOPERATION AGREEMENT
TAGS: EFIS, ETRD, MARR, PINS, NZ, UR, AS, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/57e6270e-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009